

## A Five-Step Plan for Overcoming Entrepreneurial Burnout

Before I became a coach, I was a human resources manager for a non-profit organization. Although this work did not fulfill my soul's calling, I was very good at my job and confident in my role. Hardly anything rattled me; whatever came up, I knew I could handle it. I was the calmest, most laid-back person on the face of the earth.

Then I started my wellness and spiritual life coaching business. Overnight, I became a bundle of nerves. I went from being friendly and cheerful to moody and irritable. My appetite diminished, and I had sleepless nights. My energy plummeted. I didn't know what to think.

None of the training, books, or magazines I'd consulted had prepared me for the pressure of being a solopreneur (a one-person business). Suddenly I was wearing so many hats, some completely new to me. I was president, office manager, IT director, chief financial officer, marketing manager, administrative assistant, and coach all rolled into one. Running in a dozen different directions at once, I would be coaching a client one hour and designing my brochure the next. Since cloning was not an option, it felt as if I had to be everywhere at the same time!

I was quickly heading for burnout. I hit a turning point when I came down with the flu. Lying in bed, with every muscle in my body aching, I knew something had to change. I was a health and nutrition coach – I needed to walk my talk – and fast. I took a long, hard look back and carefully pinpointed what had gone wrong. Then I devised a five-step plan to turn things around.

**Step 1:** First, I changed my self-talk. Instead of focusing on what was making me nervous and fearful, I told myself: the world will not end if you meet your clients at Starbucks, if your computer blows-up, or if whole business falls apart and you have to go back to a job in corporate America. There is an answer to every problem, if you will just trust that you have the ability to handle whatever issues come your way, and learn to address them with calmness and maturity.

**Step 2:** Next I prioritized my health. To truly be the product of my product, and keep my business running, I needed to make time for exercise, cooking healthful meals, and meditating or journaling every day. In other words, I had to do all the things I was recommending to my clients. I had to become my own client.

**Step 3:** I created a new schedule that kept my life in balance. I allowed time to meditate for at least 15 minutes each morning. I scheduled 15 minutes of yoga stretches. I took an hour for lunch each day, not just a few minutes for hastily swallowed food. Each lunch hour included a stroll for fresh air and a change of scenery. In the evening, I limited after-dinner work to two hours. At least one day each weekend was dedicated to having fun and connecting with my partner and friends.

**Step 4:** I focused on the present moment. I quit worrying about tomorrow and congratulated myself on however little or much that I accomplished each day. Whatever did not get done, so be it. I would transfer the item to my next day calendar, and leave for tomorrow, tomorrow's work.

**Step 5:** I reached out for support. Keeping my anxieties bottled up only created internal pressure. I began sharing my challenges and concerns with loved ones, friends, and peers, and I hired a business coach to help me organize and market my business. By sharing my concerns, I received many suggestions that often helped my business.

By following these steps, I brought my life and business back into balance, and my original aura of calm and confidence returned. Of course every business owner experiences her share of headaches and concerns – if she doesn't, she's doing something wrong. But by taking excellent care of myself, and trusting in the abundance of the Universe, I mastered the skills I needed to escape burnout.

If you are on the road to entrepreneurial burnout, take one hour this week just for yourself and review this five-step plan. What is one step you can take for yourself to create balance?

Love & light,

Lucia Luna

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